

**River Access Risk Assessment**

Aspect of the activity	Type of Risk involved	Without controls			Control measures to be taken	With controls		
		Likelihood	Severity	Risk Rating		Likelihood	Severity	Risk Rating
To access the river, a steep set of steps needs to be negotiated and it is not possible to affix a handrail in this location	Children or adults could slip and fall, causing minor injury or possibly a more serious injury such as a fracture.	3 = Fairly likely	3 = significant	9 High	At least 2 adults to be with a group of any size, and 3 adults with a group size of more than 20; This must include at least one adult who is first aid trained, and they must carry the first aid kit(s) relevant to the group of children they are with; 1 adult to be positioned at the bottom of the steps before any children start to descend; 1 adult to be positioned at the 90 degree turn in the steps; Children to be advised that only one child at a time should be on each step, and adults to ensure this is followed; Children and adults to be wearing suitable footwear (usually wellington boots with good grip) and adults to ensure this is the case;	2 = Unlikely	3 = significant	6 Moderate
Children will be near to water, which could have a strong current and may rise quickly	Children or adults could become immersed in the water, resulting in significant injury or death. This could occur through a person accidentally falling into the river, due to an unexpected change in river flow or depth where they are standing, or becoming 'stuck' in silt and mud, marshy ground or reed growth.	2 = Unlikely	5 = severe	10 High	Visits to the river only to take place when water levels are low (so that there is at least a 3m-wide section under the bridge not covered by water); On the morning of a river visit, group leader to check the environment agency flood warning website and the trip to be cancelled if warnings are in place for that day, and/or if heavy rain is forecast; adults to mark out a line 1m from the water's edge not to be crossed by children unless supervised 1:1 by adults; children and adults not to enter water at a depth greater than the height of their wellington boots; adults to be vigilant about maintaining calm, orderly behaviour so that enforcement of the 1m boundary can be effective;	1 = Very unlikely	5 = severe	5 Moderate
Water can carry pollutants that could cause harm to children and adults	The following risks are associated with exposure to river water, eg via open wounds or accidental ingestion: infection Leptospirosis (Weil's disease) Lyme disease Hepatitis A or B Needlestick injuries Blue-green algae	3 = Fairly likely	4 = very significant	12 High	Wear long sleeved clothing Cover any cuts and broken skin with waterproof plasters Wash hands before and after contact with water and prior to eating and drinking Check for bites and ticks Follow up any symptoms with a medical practitioner	2 = Unlikely	3 = significant	6 Moderate

Plants and animals could cause bites, stings or irritation	Children or adults could be stung or bitten, or come into contact with a plant that irritates their skin. Serious reactions are rare.	3 = Fairly likely	2 = not significant	6 Moderate	Children are to be advised beforehand and their parents made aware of the trip and this risk assessment. Adults to clear path of overgrown nettles at regular intervals and to check for other plants that could cause irritation before taking children down to the river.	2 = Unlikely	2 = not significant	4 Low
Risks to the environment	Disturbance of silt and mud could cause downstream pollution. Working in the river could cause a spread of infection and alien/ invasive species Distress could be caused to fish and other wildlife	3 = Fairly likely	2 = not significant	6 Moderate	Giving children knowledge and awareness of wildlife as part of each river-based lesson. Children only to enter water wearing wellington boots and only if necessary to meet the intended outcome of the lesson. Children to be taught not to disturb the river bed any more than necessary for their work, and to keep noise levels low so they can focus on learning and respect the wildlife.	2 = Unlikely	2 = not significant	4 Low